

REMARKS

I. Status of Pending Claims

Claims 22, 25, 28-30, 32-39, 57, 58, 60-89, and 96 are pending in this application, with claims 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 57, 60, 61, 62, 70, and 84 being independent. In the Office Action dated January 4, 2007, the Examiner rejected each pending claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Japanese Publication No. JP 08-257136 to Asano et al. ("Asano") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,984,581 to Stice ("Stice") either alone, or further in view one or more of U.S. Patent No. 5,174,302 to Palmer ("Palmer"); U.S. Patent No. 5,947,940 to Beisel ("Beisel"), and U.S. Patent No. 4,763,647 to Gambale ("Gambale").

With this reply, Applicants have cancelled claim 97 and amended claims 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 57, 60, 61, 62, 70, and 84 to more clearly define the protection Applicant is entitled to. In addition, new claims 98-116 have been added. The originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and drawings fully support the subject matter of the amended claims and the new claims. No new matter is introduced.

**II. Claims 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 57, 60-62, 70, and 84
Are Patentable in View of the Prior Art**

In the Office Action of January 4, 2007, the Examiner rejected each of independent claims 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 57, 60-62, 70, and 84, asserting that each claim is obvious in view of the prior art. In rejecting these independent claims, the Examiner relied upon Asano as the primary reference in an obviousness rejection. Neither Asano, nor any of the other cited art, either alone or in combination, adequately supports a prima facie case of anticipation or obviousness over the present claims.

For example, the reference of Asano fails to teach or suggest at least the claimed features of a coil extending beyond the distal end of a core by at least three non-contacting turns of the coil, as recited and arranged in claims 22, 33, and 61; a polymer and a metal tip, as recited and arranged in claims 28, 38, and 62; a first polymer and a second polymer as recited and arranged in claims 29, 57, and 70; and a polymer, core, coil, and tip, as recited and arranged in claims 32, 60, and 84. In addition, none of the cited secondary references, either alone or in combination compensate for the deficiencies of Asano.

Therefore, the cited prior art also fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 22, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 57, 60, 61, 62, 70, and 84, and all of the claims dependent thereon.

III. Conclusion


In view of the foregoing remarks, this claimed invention is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests

reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: 
David M. Ruddy
Reg. No. 53,945